Funerals: According to the Qur'ân and Sunnah

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Al-Istirjâ

When the news of death in the family reaches the relatives and friends, the first thing that they should say is the following Qur'ânic verse (2:156): **"Inna lil-lâhi wa innâ ilayhi râji'ûn [Truly! To Allâh we belong and truly, to Him we shall return]."** This *du'â* is known in arabic as *al-Istirjâ*.

In the case of the husband or wife, they should add *"Allâhumma ajirnî fî musîbatî wakh-luf lî khayran minhâ* (or *minhu* if it is the wife saying it)." [O Allâh grant me refuge in my affliction and replace her (or him) with someone better]

Crying For Mercy at the Time of Death is Allowed

The Prophet shed tears, but did not cry out in a loud voice ...

> We went with Allâh's Apostle to the blacksmith Abû Saif, and he was the husband of the wet-nurse of Ibrâhîm (the son of the Prophet). Allâh's Apostle took Ibrâhîm and kissed him and smelled him and later we entered Abû Saif's house and at that time Ibrâhîm was in his last breaths, and the eyes of Allâh's Apostle started shedding tears. 'Abdur-Rahmân bin 'Awf said, "O Allâh's Apostle, even you are weeping!" He said, *"O Ibn 'Awf, this is mercy."* Then he wept more and said, *"The eyes are shedding tears and the heart is grieved, and we will not say except what pleases our Lord, O Ibrâhîm! Indeed we are grieved by your separation."* [*Sahîh al-Bukhârî*]

Words at the Time of Dying

Both Abû Sa'îd al-Khudrî and Abû Hurayrah quoted the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* as saying *"Prompt your dying ones (to say): lâ ilâha illallâh."* [*Sahîh Muslim*, vol.2, #1996] and, *"... whoever's last words before dying are: lâ ilâha illallâh, will enter Paradise one day, even if he is afflicted before that by punishment."* [This addition is only found in *Sahîh ibn Hibbân*, authenticated in *Irwâ al-Ghalîl*, vol.3, pg.150]

This statement does not simply mean that we should mention *shahâdah*, but the dying person should be instructed to say the *shahâdah*, as is evident from the Prophet's statement, *"... whoever's last words are: lâ ilâhha illallâh ... "*

Muslims are also encouraged to be present when non-Muslims are dying in order to present Islâm to them, in the hope that they will accept Islâm prior to their deaths. For the acceptance of Islâm at this point to be of any benefit, it must be based on knowledge, it must be expressed sincerely and with certainty, and it must take place before the actual throes of death begin.

> Allâh's Messenger said, *"I testify that there is no god worthy of worship but Allâh and that I am the Messenger of Allâh. Any servant who meets Allâh with those two {testimonies}, having no doubt in them, will enter Paradise."* [*Muslim*, vol.1, p.20, #41, Narrated Abû Hurayrah]

> The Prophet said, *"Allâh, Most Great and Glorious, will accept his servants*

> *repentance until the throes of death begin."* [Collected by *at-Tirmidhî* and *ibn Mâjah* and authenticated in *Sahîh Sunan Ibn Mâjah*, vol.2, p.418, #3430. See *Riyadh-us-Salihîn*, vol.1, p.12, #18 for an English translation of this *hadîth*]

Good Words

People present may pray aloud for the one who is dying letting the person hear words of concern and sympathy. Negative words should be avoided this will only increase the difficulties the sick and dying are facing. Good words and positive thoughts will make the process of dying easier and recovery from illness more bearable ...

> Umm Salamah related that the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said, "*If you are in the presence of a sick or dying person, you should say good things, for verily the angels say "Âmîn" to whatever you say."* When Umm Salamah asked the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* what should she say, he replied: *"Say: Allâhumma-ghfir lî wa lahu wa a'qibnî minhu'uqbâ hasanah [O Allâh forgive him and me, and grant me a good substitute after him.]"*

[*Sahîh Muslim*, vol.2, p.436, #2002; *Sunan Abû Dâwûd*, vol.2, p.887, #3109; *Sunan Ibn-i-Mâjah*, vol.2, pp.366-7, #1447 and *Mishkat Al-Masabih*, vol.1, p337; *Sahîh Muslim*, vol.2, p.436, #2002]

Sûrah Yâsîn

The practice of specifically reading the 36th chapter of the Qur'ân, Sûrah Yâsîn, in the presence of the dying has no basis in the authentic Sunnah. Neither the Prophet nor his companions did it, or recommended that it be done. However, it does fall under the general heading of "good things" which could be said in the presence of the one who is dying, but it carries with it no special value ...

There is an inauthentic *hadîth* narrated by Ma'qil and collected in *Sunan Abû Dâwûd*, vol.2, p.889, #3115, *Sunan Ibn-i-Mâjah*, vol.2, p.367, #1448. See also *Mishkat Al-Masabih*, vol.1, p.338. It is declared inauthentic in *Da'îf Sunan Abî Dâwûd*, p316, #683. This inauthentic *hadîth* incorrectly specifies that Sûrah Yâsîn should be read for the dying; to believe that doing so has special value is considered *bid'ah*, a sinful innovation in the religion.

Facing the Qiblah

Turning the body of one who is dying so that he or she faces the *qiblah* [Makkah] has no foundation in the practice of the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and his companions. The body should be turned to face Makkah when it is placed in the grave, according to the Prophets instructions. However at the time of dying there were no instructions. Turning the body became a custom after the time of the Prophets companions, but was objected to by the scholars of that time ... i.e. Sa'îd ibn al-Musayyib ibn Hazn (634-713CE), from the Madînite tribe of Makhzûm, who was one of the seven leading legal scholars of Madînah. He was known as the most knowledgeable scholar about 'Umar ibn al-Khattâb's legal principles and his rulings. He lived on what he earned from the sale of olive oil and he never

accepted grants. [*Al-A'lâm*, vol.3, p.155]

[Collected by Ibn Abî Shaybah in *al-Musannaf* and authenticated in *Ahkâmul-Janâ'iz*, p.11, nt.15]

Acceptance of Fate

The dying individual is obliged to accept his lot gracefully so that it becomes a source of reward and blessing for him on the Day of Judgement. The Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* taught that patiently bearing the trials of this life is an act of righteousness which expiates sins.

> Abdullâh stated that he visited Allâh's Messenger *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* while he was suffering from a high fever and said to him ,"O Messenger Of Allâh, you have a high fever." He replied ,*"Yes, I have a fever equal to that of two of your men experience."* I asked, "Is it because you will have double the reward?" He replied, *"Yes , it is so. Any Muslim who is afflicted with the harm of a thorn prick or more will have, as a result of it, some of his sins expiated the way a tree sheds it's leaves."*

[*Sahîh al-Bukhârî*, vol.7, p.374, #551 and *Sahîh Muslim*, vol.4, p.1364, #6235]

Between Fear and Hope

The dying person should be in a psychological state between fear and hope. The person should fear Allâh's punishment for his or her sins and, at the same time, hope for Allâh's mercy and forgiveness ...

> **"Do not lose hope of Allâh's mercy, for verily Allâh (can) forgive all sin."** [The Noble Qur'ân - az-Zumar 39:53]

The only exception to that rule is the sin of shirk, as it negates the very purpose of creation ...

> **"Say: O 'Ibâdî (My slaves) who have transgressed against themselves (by committing evil deeds and sins)! Despair not of the Mercy of Allâh, verily Allâh forgives all sins. Truly, He is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."** [The Noble Qur'ân - 4:48, see also 4:116]

Verily, Allâh forgives not that partners should be set up with him in worship, but He forgives except that (anything else) to whom He pleases, and whoever sets up partners with Allâh in worship, he has indeed invented a tremendous sin.

To Wish for Death

No matter how severe the pain of the sickness may become, one is not allowed to hope or wish for death. The death wish reflects a belief that Allâh has burdened one beyond his or

her capacity and indicates a lack of patience. The longer people live, the more opportunity they have to do good and improve their lot ...

> Anas quoted the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* as saying, *"None of you should wish for death because of some harm which has afflicted him. But if one must do it, let him say: Allâhumma ahyinî mâ kânatil-hayâtu khayran lî [O Allâh keep me alive as long as living is best for me] wa tawaffanî ithâ kânatil-wafâtu khayran lî [and take my life if death is better for me]."*

[al-Bukhârî, vol.7, p390, #575, Muslim, vol.4, p.1411, #6480 & 6485]

Debts

Dying individuals may have in their possession certain items belonging to others. If that is the case,they should return them as soon as they are able to do so, in order to avoid having to pay them back from their good deeds on the Day of Judgement.

> The Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* was reported to have said, *"There are two types of debt: whoever dies intending to repay it, I will be responsible for it,and whoever dies with no intention to repay it, will have it taken from his good deeds. There will not be any dînârs or dirhams on that Day."*

[Collected by *at-Tabaranî* and authenticated in *Ahkâmul Janâ'iz*, p.5]

Wasîyah (The Will)

Before dying, everyone leaving behind wealth and property should write or dictate a will in which they may give away up to one-third of their wealth to those who would not inherit from them based on Islâmic inheritance laws.

This recommendation was instituted by Allâh to protect the rights of non-inheriting relatives and friends. Consequently the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* encouraged muslims to record and keep it with them,as soon as the need arises.

Abdullâh ibn'Umar related that the Messenger of Allâh *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said, *"It is not right for a muslim who has something to bequeath to pass two nights without having it in writing in his possession ... "* [Reported by ibn 'Umar and recorded in all of the six major books of *hadîth* ... *Sahîh al-Bukhârî*,vol.4, p1, #1, *Sahîh Muslim*, vol.3, p863, #3987 and *Sunan Abû Dâwûd*, vol.2, p.805, #2856]

According to Islâmic law, wealth obtained by *wasîyah* is not considered inheritance, but a gift. Under this law Muslims may leave a portion of their wealth to non-Muslim relatives and a Muslim may also receive a portion in a will from a non-Muslim relative, because it is considered a gift. Otherwise *"A Muslim must not inherit from a disbeliever, nor should a disbeliever inherit from a Muslim."* [*Sahîh al-Bukhârî*, vol.8, p.498, #756 and *Sahîh Muslim*, vol.3, p.852, #3928]

According to the system of Islâmic inheritance laws (*farâ'id*), non-Muslims are not classified as heirs to Muslims. Likewise, Muslims have no right to take portions of their

dead non-Muslim relatives 'wealth allotted by non-Islâmic systems of inheritance.' (That is, if the deceased non-Muslim relative does not write a will (*wasîyah*) and the non-Muslim state divides up his / her wealth according to it's manmade laws, the Muslim relative is prohibited by Islâmic law to accept any share allotted to him / her by this process.)

After Death

Obligatory actions on those present:

Once the person expires (passes away), the relatives and those present are obliged to perform particular services for him or her.

1. Closing the eyes and du'â (supplication)

> The eyes of the dead person should be closed and some prayers should be made for him, based on the following *hadîth* of Umm Salamah:
>
> Umm Salamah said, Allâh's Messenger *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* came in and found Abû Salamah's eyes staring. He closed them and said, *"Verily when the soul is snatched, the eyes follow it."* Some people from his family began to scream, so he said, *"Only pray for good for yourselves, for verily the angels say 'Âmîn [So-be-it]' to whatever you say,"* He then prayed, saying:
>
> *Allâhummagh-fir li Abî Salamah warfa' darajatahû filmahdîyîn,*
> [O Allâh, forgive Abû Salamah and raise his level among the rightly guided,]
>
> *wakhlufhu fî 'aqibihî filghâbirîn.*
> [and let his remaining offspring be like him.]
>
> *waghfir lanâ walahû yâ Rabbal-Âlamîn*
> [Forgive us and forgive him,O Lord of all the worlds]
>
> *wafsah lahû fî qabrihî wa nawwir lahû fîh.*
> [and expand his grave and illuminate it for him.]

[Sahîh Muslim,vol.2, pp.436-7, #2003]

2. Covering the body

> A sheet of cloth large enough to cover the whole body of the deceased should be drawn over the whole body.

3. Hastening the burial

> It is not permissible for Muslims to delay the burial in order for the maximum number of relatives to see the deceased, as is common practice among other communities. Once death is evident, the body should be prepared and taken out of the house for prayer and burial as soon as possible. In this way, contact with the dead body is minimized, which keeps the grief and hurt of seeing the dead down to a minimum. Abû Hurayrah related that the Prophet said *"Hasten the funeral rites."* [Collected in all six major books of *hadîth*. See: *Sahîh Al-al-*

Bukhârî vol.2, p.225, #401; *Sahîh Muslim*, vol.2, p448, #2059; *Sunan Abû Dâwûd*, vol.2, pp897-8, #3153; *Sunan Ibn-i-Mâjah*, vol.2, p.383, #1477; *Mishkat Al-Masabih*, vol.1, p338]

4. Locating the burial

The dead should be buried in the same area where they died. Transporting the body to another area or another country is not permissible if it will unnecessarily delay the burial or cause financial or other hardship.

5. Paying Off the Debts of the Deceased

All outstanding debts of the dead person should be repaid from the wealth that he or she left behind, even if it consumes all of the inheritance. If the dead person is without wealth or the inheritance was not sufficient to cover all of his or her debts, the Islâmic state will be responsible to repay the remainder, if the dead person had made serious efforts to pay it.

Permissible Actions by Those Present

1. Uncovering the face and kissing it

Those present at the individual's death or those who come to see the dead person for the last time are allowed to uncover the face and kiss it. Kissing the face of the dead is considered a part of the *Sunnah* of the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and his companions. [*Sunan Abû Dâwûd* vol.2, p.898, #3157, *Sunan Ibn-i-Mâjah* vol.2, p.371, #1456]

2. Crying

Those present and the relatives of the deceased are allowed to cry for a maximum period of three (3) days.

Abdullah ibn Ja'far narrated that the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* delayed coming to visit Ja'far's family *'for three days after his death'*, then he came to them and said, *"Do not cry for my brother after today."* [*Dâwûd*, vol.3, p.1165, #4180]

3. Patience

Relatives of the deceased are obliged to be patient, practice self restraint, and gracefully accept Allâh's decree, because Allâh has already promised mankind that He would test them.

> **"Verily I will test you with fear and hunger, and loss of wealth, life, and the fruit (of your labour), so give glad tidings to the patient ones."** [The Noble Qur'ân 2:155]

Among the glad tidings for those who are patient when loved ones are lost is that a home is prepared for them in Paradise, Abû Mûsâ al-Ash'arî quoted Allâh's Messenger as saying:

"If a child of [Allâh's] slave dies, Allâh will say to His angels: You took My slaves child, they will reply: Yes, He will then say: You took the love of his life, and they will reply: Yes, He will then ask: What did My slave say? and they will reply: He praised you and said, surely, we belong to Allâh and to Him we will return.' Allâh will then say: Build a house in Paradise for My slave and call it the House of Praise." [*Sahîh Sunan at-Tirmithî*, vol.1, pp.298-9, #814]

However true patience for which Allâh, *subhanahu wa ta'ala*, promises reward is that which is practised when calamity first strikes. The real test of patience is at the time of the calamity; being patient after the initial shock and reaction have worn off is not considered real patience.

Al-Hidâd (Mourning)

Women are required to avoid all forms of beautification as a sign of mourning for their husbands, children or relatives. This does not contradict the recommendations for patience, as long as the mourning does not exceed three days for her child or relative and four months and ten days for her husband.

Umm 'Atîyah said, "We were forbidden to mourn for more than three days for a dead person, except for a husband, in which case a woman should mourn for four months and ten days [during this period] we were not allowed to wear *khol* on our eyes, nor perfume ourselves, nor wear coloured clothes, except *'asab* cloth. It was permissible for us at the time of bathing at the end of menses to use a small amount of incense."

[*al-Bukhârî*, vol.7, pp.193-4,# 254 and *Sahîh Muslim*, vol.2, p.778, #3552]

Forbidden Actions by Those Present

1. Wailing

The Prophet strictly forbade wailing, screaming and hiring of mourners. Furthermore, he identified such practices as acts of *kufr* (disbelief), because they indicate displeasure with what Allâh has decreed. *Îmân* (faith) includes the belief that Allâh is the source of all good and that all of His actions are wise. Proper *îmân* would never allow those who possess it to commit such acts of ignorance.

Abû Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet said, *"There are two practices found among people, both of which indicate disbelief: ridiculing the ancestry (of others) and wailing over the dead."* [*Muslim*, vol.1, p.44, #128]

"Verily the dead are punished in their graves by the wailing of their family over them." [*al-Bukhârî*, vol.2, p.213, #379; *Muslim*, vol.2, p.439, #2015]

The Prophet said, *"The deceased who is wailed over is tortured for that wailing."* [*al-Bukhârî* 2.378, Narrated Al-Mughira]

The Prophet said, *"He who slaps the cheeks, tears the clothes and follows the tradition of the Days of Ignorance is not from us."* [*al-Bukhârî* 2.385, Narrated Abdullâh]

The dead will suffer due to the wailing of relatives in two cases: (a) When the deceased requested wailing prior to his death. (b) If the deceased knew that it was the custom of his people and he did not request that they not do so over him.

2. Striking Cheeks and Tearing of Clothes

At the time of the Prophet , the practice in Arabia for women in mourning was to slap or scratch their cheeks and to rip their clothes. These acts were strictly forbidden, as well as similar practices which involved self-punishment and the destruction of material wealth. These practices all heighten the pain and sorrow that accompany death, while Islâm seeks to minimize it.

Ibn Mas'ûd reported that the Prophet said, *"Whoever slaps his face, tears his clothes, or invites (others) to an un-Islâmic slogan is not of us."* [Collected by *al-Bukhârî*, *Muslim*, *Ibn Mâjah* and *al-Bayhaqî*; *al-Bukhârî*, vol.2, p.216, #385; *Sahîh Muslim*, vol.1, p.59, #184]

3. Shaving the Head or Dishevelling the Hair

In Islâm, women are required to shun various forms of beautification in order to avoid attracting other men during their period of mourning, since contracting marriage during this time is forbidden. However, shaving the head and dishevelling the hair is prohibited, as these acts go beyond normal bounds and are associated with pre-Islâmic concepts. [*al-Bukhârî*, vol.2, p.215, #383; *Muslim*, vol.1, p.59, nos.186-7]

4. Announcing Someone's Death

It is forbidden to make a big affair about announcing anyone's death, such as proclaiming it from the minarets of the mosques, announcing it in the market streets, etc.

If someone died, Huthayfah ibn al-Yamân used to say, "Do not proclaim his death to anyone, for fear that it may be a death announcement and I heard Allâh's Messenger forbid death announcement with my own two ears." [*at-Tirmidhî* and *Sunan Ibn-i-Mâjah*, vol.2, p.382, #1476, and authenticated in *Sahîh Sunan Ibn Mâjah*, vol.1, p.248, #1203]

However, a calmly expressed general announcement is allowed, based on the Prophet's practice.

5. Gathering to Give Condolences

The custom of organizing gatherings in the home, at the grave or in the *masjid* to give condolences to the family of the deceased is against the *Sunnah* of the

companions of the Prophet.

Imâm ash-Shâfi'î said, "I dislike gatherings, even if there is no wailing or crying. For it only renews the [family's feelings of] sorrow and puts burdens on their food supplies." [*Al-Umm*, vol.1, p.248, quoted in *Ahkâmul-Janâ'iz*, p.167, *Al-Majmû'*, vol.5, p.306, quoted in *Ahkâmul-Janâ'iz*, p.167]

6. Preparing Food by the Family of the Deceased

The obligation placed on the family of the dead person to prepare food for gatherings is incorrect, based on the previously mentioned statement of the Prophets *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* companion, al-Bajalî. Furthermore, it contradicts the Prophet's *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* explicit instructions to relatives, friends and neighbours is to send food to the bereaved family. [*al-Bukhârî*, vol.7, p.401, #593; *Muslim*, vol.4, p.1202, #5491. Collected by *at-Tirmidhî*, *Abû Dâwûd* and *ibn Mâjah* (*Sunan Ibn Mâjah*, vol.2, p.455, #1610) and authenticated in *Sahîh Sunan Ibn Mâjah*, vol.1, p.268, #1306]

Recommended Actions by Those Present

It was the practice of the Prophet to have his family prepare food for the relatives of the dead.

People later elaborated on this practice until it became an exaggerated ritual with much pomp and show. Later scholars considered its distorted form an innovation and abandoned it. [*Sunan Ibn-i-Mâjah*, vol.2, p.455, #1610]

Testifying to the Good of the Dead

It is recommended that righteous Muslims who knew the deceased well and were among his or her neighbours should testify to others about the good qualities of the deceased.

Anas quote the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* as saying, *"For any Muslim who dies and four of his close neighbours testify that they have known him to be good, Allâh-the Blessed, the Highest-will say, 'I have accepted your testimony and forgiven him for what you do not know about.' "*

[Collected by Ahmad and authenticated in Ahkâmul-Janâ'iz, pp.45-66]

Preparing the Body

There should be no delay in preparing the body, i.e. washing, shrouding, and burial of the deceased, supported by the Prophets instruction, *"Hasten the funeral rites."* [Collected in all six books of *Hadîth*. See *Sahîh al-Bukhârî*, vol.2, p.255, #401]

1. Injunctions Concerning Washing

Fard Kifâyah (Collective Obligation) - Washing the body prior to shrouding and the burial is obligatory, according to numerous recorded instructions given by the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. [Sahîh Al-al-Bukhârî, vol.2, p.194, #344]

Males Wash Males - As a general rule, males should take the responsibility of washing males,and females should wash females. The only exception to the rule is in the case mahrams, such as of husband and wife, or small children.

The Most Knowledgeable - Those who take responsibility of washing the dead should be the most knowledgeable of the procedures, preferably from among the deceased's immediate family members or relatives. Those with *taqwa* (fear of Allâh, piety) should be chosen in order to ensure proper treatment of the dead.

Ghusl (Islâmic Bath) - Those who wash the dead are not required to be in a state of purity. Consequently menustrating women may perform the washing procedure. However, it is recommended that those who wash the dead take an Islâmic bath(Ghusl) afterwards, based on the following Hadîth:

> Abû Hurayah reported that the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said, *"Whoever washes the dead should take a ghusl, and whoever carries the corpse should make wudû."* [Sunan Abû Dâwûd, vol.2, p.898, #3155]

2. Method of Washing

The body should be laid out, stripped of its garments and its joints loosened, if possible. A cloth should be placed over the private parts, between the navel and the knees so that the washers do not look at the pubic area of the dead person.The stomach should be pressed to expel any remaining impurities.

A rag or cloth should be used to wash the body and the washing should begin with the places on the right side of the body washed during *wudû*.

After completeing the wudû,the woman's hair should be undone if it was braided and the hair thoroughly washed.Then the rest of the body should be washed ,turning the body on it's side so as to complete the right side before washing the left.

The body should be washed a minimum of three times and the water should have some cleaning agent in it, like soap or disinfectant. The final washing should have some perfume in it, such as camphor or the like.

The body should then be dried and the hair combed out. In the case of women the hair should be plaited into three braids,one from the front and two from the sides and placed behind her head.

Exceptions: The Pilgrim ... In the case of a person who dies in a state of ihrâm, perfume should not be used in washing his or her body.

3. The Martyr

In the case of the martyr (*shahîd*), his or her body should not be washed at all but be buried

as it is.

4. Injunctions Concerning the Shroud

Shrouding the body is obligatory, based on the commands of the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* to do so. The body should be shrouded immediately after it is washed and dried.

The shroud or its cost should be taken from the wealth left behind of the deceased if there is enough money to purchase garments which can cover all the body.

The shroud should be sufficient to cover the whole body, if not, those preparing the body should supply a proper shroud.

If the number of dead is great or the cloth used for shrouding is insufficient for all the bodies, more than one body may be wrapped in the same shroud at a time.

The number of sheets used to wrap the body may be as few as one sheet. It could also be two sheets. The preferable number is generally considered to be three sheets, based on the fact that the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* was shrouded in three. However, since the use of one or two sheets were suggested and approved by the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* himself, the companions choice of three sheets cannot be considered more preferable than two or one. There is no differance between the man and woman in the number of sheets used. The Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* did not specify a particular number for women and another for men, as is commonly held among muslims today.

The preferable color is white. It is also recommended that the cloth or at least one of the sheets be striped.

It is recommended that the shroud be perfumed with incense thrice, except in the case of the *muhrim*, as was previously mentioned.

Spending large sums of money on the shroud the way non-Muslims compete with each other in buying the most expensive coffins, is strictly forbidden in Islâm.The sheets should be ordinary cloth, preferably cotton and not synthetics, so that it decomposes quickly along with the body, and the number of sheets should not exceed three.

5. Injunctions Concerning the Funeral Procession

Following The Bier - To follow a muslims bier is among the obligatory rights due to every muslim from all muslims who witness his or her funeral procession.

Method of following The Bier - There are two basic ways of following the bier. Both ways were done by the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, but he favored the second method by indicating that it's reward was greater.

Following it from the family's home until the funeral prayer is made for the deceased.

Following it from the family's home until the body has been buried.

The Participation of Women - The virtue of following the bier is basically for men alone. Women are not encouraged to take part based on the fact that the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* prohibited their participation.

The Dirge - Following the bier with wailing, chants, dirges, burning incense etc.,are all forbidden and considered bidah (religious innovations). The way of the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and his companions wasto maintain silence while walking with the bier.

Haste in carrying the Bier - The pallbeares are required to walk quickly from the deceased house to the masjid, and from the masjid to the graveyard.

> Yahya related to me from Malik from Nafi that Abû Hurayra said, *"Make your funerals speedy, for it is only good that you are advancing him towards, or evil that you are taking off your necks."* [*Muwatta Hadîth* 16.58]

Accompanying The Bier - Those walking with the bier are allowed to walk in front, behind, or on either side of it, while those riding should be behind it.

Standing For The Bier - In the early days of Islâm, the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* used to stand when the bier passed by, but later he abolished the practice.

Transporting The Bier - Transportation of the bier in a funeral coach or vehicle (hearse) according to the traditions of non-Muslims is forbidden. Carts which could have been used to transport the dead existed in the Prophets *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* time, but he instructed his followers to walk and carry the bier with their own hands. The Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* explicitly instructed his followers on numerous occasions to differ in their religious and social customs from non-Muslims.

The Funeral Prayer

The performance of *salâtul-janâzah* (the funeral prayer) is considered *fard* (obligatory) *kifâyah*. If someone is buried without it being performed, the whole community is held responsible, but as long as some gather and perform it, the obligation is removed from the community as a whole.

Exceptions: Children Below the Age of Puberty

A child born dead or aborted after the fourth month,or one that dies before reaching puberty, does not have to have a funeral prayer because the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* did not do so for his own son.

A child aborted before the fourth month, if the child was stillborn before the fourth month,there is no funeral prayer for it, since it was not considered living in the human sense that it has a soul which may be prayed for. This ruling is based on the Hadîth related by ibn Mas'ûd, in which the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* was quoted as saying,

"Verily the creation of each one of you comes together in his mother's stomach for forty days, then he becomes a leech-like clot for a similar period, then he becomes a clump of flesh for a similar period,then an angel is sent to him and the angel blows his soul into him." [*Sahîh al-Bukhârî*, vol.8, p.387, #593 and *Sahîh Muslim*, vol.4, p.1391, # 6390]

Salâtal-Janâzah

The Martyr (*Shahîd*) - *Salâtal-Janâzah* is not required for one who dies or is killed while fighting for the cause of Islâm. Such an individual can be buried without *salâtal-janâzah*. However, the funeral prayer may be made for martyrs, since the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* did perform *salâtal-janâzah* for those who died in battle on other occasions.

An Executed Criminal - One who voluntarily confesses to a crime whose punishment is death should be prayed for,since such a confession is an unparalleled form of true repentance.

The Corrupt - The funeral prayer should be held even for those who were known to be corrupt, like alcoholics, drug addicts, adulterers, and those who abandoned prayer and *zakat*, while aknowledging that they are compulsory duties. However it is preferable that the scholars and the pious do not join in the funeral prayer for them as a punishment for them and deterrent for others like them. It was the practice of the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* not to pray for those who committed major sins, although he did allow others to do so. [*Muslim*, vol.2, p.464, #2133]

Debtors - In the beginning, the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* refused to lead the funeral prayer for those who died leaving behind debts and no means to pay them. This was done to emphasize the importance of clearing one's debts from the charity (*sadaqah*) which he received. [Muslim, vol.3,.855, #3944]

Burial without *Salâh* - It is allowable to perform the funeral prayer by the grave of someone who was buried without having *salâtul-janâzah* performed for him. [*Sahîh al-Bukhârî*, vol.2, p.192, #339, p.228, #407 and *Sahîh Muslim*, vol.2, p.453, #2084]

Salâtul-Ghâ'ib - If someone dies in a country or situation where there is no one to perform the *salâtal-janâzah* for him, it is permitted for a group of muslims to make a funeral prayer for him in his absence.This prayer is known as *salâtul-ghâ'ib*. [*Sahîh al-Bukhârî*, vol.2, p.191, # 337]

Disbelievers - The performance of funeral prayers or even seeking forgiveness or mercy for those who die in open disbelief or *nifâq* (subtle disbelief) is strictly forbidden,based on the following instruction of Allâh in the Qur'ân:

> **"Never pray for any of them who die, and do not stand by their graves, for verily they have disbelieved in Allâh and His Messenger and died in sin."** [Sûrah at-Tawbah (9):84; *Sahîh al-Bukhârî*, vol.2, pp.201-2, #359; *Sahîh Muslim*, vol.4, pp.1456-7, #6680; *Sahîh al-Bukhârî*, vol.6, p.158, #197]

<u>The Jamâ'ah (Congregation)</u>

In Congregation - *Salâtul-janâzah*, like the five daily compulsary prayers, must

be performed in congregation. This was the only way that the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* and his companions did it. The Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* was also reported to have said, *"Pray as you saw me pray."* [*Sahîh al-Bukhârî*, vol.1, p.345, #604]

The only exception to this rule was in the case of the funeral prayer for the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam*, in which the Prophets *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* companions seem to have all prayed seperately due to the uniqeness of the situation and their state of confusion at the time. [*Al-Bidâyah wa an-Nihâyah*, vol.5, pp.304-5]

Three Rows - It is preferable that those behind the imâm form at least three rows, as this was the Sunnah when the number of worshippers was insufficient to fill the *masjid*.

> *"Any muslim who dies and three rows of muslims make salâh for him, will be forgiven."* [*Ahkâmul-Janâiz*, p.99, with support of the following Hadîth: *Dâwûd*, vol.2, p.899, #3160]

Two Men - If there is only one man besides the imâm, he should pray behind the imâm and not beside him as he would in the case of all other salâhs. [Collected by *al-Bayhaqî*, *al-Hâkim*, and *at-Tabarânî* and authenticated in *Ahkâmul-Janâ'iz*, p.100]

The *Imâm* - The *amîr* or his assistant has more right to lead the funeral prayer than the deceased's *walî*. If neither the *amîr* nor his representative is present, the one who has the most knowledge of Al-Qur'ân should lead the funeral prayer, even if he is a child. Knowledge is not just memorization, but that which benefits. [Collected by *al-Bayhaqî* and authenticated in *Ahkâmul-Janâ'iz*, pp.100-01; *Sahîh al-Bukhârî*, vol.5, pp.413-4, #595]

A Number of Dead - If there are a number of dead people, a single salâtul-janâzah can be made for all of them. However if there are males and females,the female bodies are placed in front of the imâm and the males behind the imâm even if they are young children. [Collected by *an-Nasâ'î* (1:280), *al-Bayhaqî* (4:33) and *ad-Dâraqutnî* (194),and authenticated in *Ahkâmul-Janâ'iz*, p.103]

Location of Prayer:

Inside the Masjid - The common practice today of holding the funeral prayer inside the masjid is based on the occasional practice of the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. [See *Sahîh Muslim*, vol.2, pp.460-1, #2124]

Outside the Masjid - It is however, preferable to have a place (*musallâ*) set aside for the funeral prayer outside the masjid, as this was the usual practice of the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. [See *Sahîh al-Bukhârî*, vol.2, p.191, #337, *Sahîh Muslim*, vol.2, p.452, #2077]

Between the Graves - It is forbidden for *salâtul-janâzah* to be said for the dead between the graves, according to the following hadîth narrated by Anas ibn Mâlik, in which he said:

> "The Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* forbade the performance

of the *salâh* for the dead in between the graves." [Collected by *at-Tabarânî* and authenticated in *Ahkâmul-Janâ'iz*, p.108, #72]

The Method of Prayer:

Position of The Imâm - The imâm should stand, facing the *qiblah*, behind the head of the dead man and behind the middle of the dead woman. [*Sunan Abû Dâwûd*, vol.2, pp.907-8, #3188 authenticated in *Sahîh Sunan Abî Dâwûd*, vol.2, p.615, #2735]

Number of *Takbîrs* - It is possible to do either four, five, six, seven or nine *takbîrs*, as all of them are recorded in authentic *hadîths* and acts of the Prophets companions.

Four *Takbîrs*: - Abû Hurayrah related that the Messenger of Allâh *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* announced the Najâshî's death on the same day which he died and went out with them to a place designated for large congregational prayers.He arranged them in rows and pronounced four *takbîrs* during the funeral prayer. [Sahîh *al-Bukhârî*, vol.2, p.227, #404; *Sahîh Muslim*, vol.2, p.452, #2077]

Five *Takbîrs*: Abdur-Rahmân ibn Abî Laylâ said, "Zayd ibn Arqam used to make four *takbîrs* on our dead, but once he made five, so we asked him about it." He replied, "Allâh's Messenger *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* used to do it." [*Sahîh Musli*m, vol.2, pp.453-4, #2089]

Six *Takbîrs*: Abd Khayr said Alî ibn Abî Tâlib used to make six *takbîrs* [when he led funeral prayers] on those who took part in the Battle of Badr, five *takbîrs* on the [rest of the] Prophet's companions, and four *takbîrs* on all the rest of the people. [Collected by *al-Bayhaqî* and *ad-Dâraqutnî* and authenticated in *Ahkâmul-Janâ'iz*, p.113]

Seven *Takbîrs*: Musâ, the son of Abdullâh ibn Yazîd, said that Alî ibn Abî Tâlib made the funeral prayer using seven *takbîrs* for Abû Qatâdah, who was among those who took part in the Battle of Badr. [Collected by *al-Bayhaqî* and authenticated in *Ahkâmul-Janâ'iz*, pp.113-4]

Nine *Takbîrs*: Abdullah ibn az-Zubayr reported that the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* made the funeral prayer for Hamzah using nine *takbîrs*. [Collected by *at-Tahâwî* and *at-Tabarânî* and authenticated in *Ahkâmul-Janâ'iz*, p.114]

Raising the Hands - It is permissable to either raise one's hands with each *takbîr*, or to do so only for the first *takbîr*. [*Sahîh al-Bukhâr*î, vol.2, p.228, chapter 55]

Placing the Hands - The right hand should be placed on the left on the chest, as in regular prayer, since there are no authentic hadîths to indicate otherwise. [*Sahîh al-Bukhârî*, vol.1, pp.396-7, #707]

Recitation - Immediately after the first *takbîr*, the chapter al-Fâtihah should be read, as recorded in authentic *hadîths*.The only thing which should be read prior to the Fâtihah is the "Refuge" and the "*basmalah*." [*Sahîh al-Bukhârî*, vol.2,

p.236, #419; *Sahîh al-Bukhârî*, vol.1, p.397, #710; *Sahîh Muslim*, vol.1, p.219, #786]

Prayer for the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* - Immediately after the second *takbîr*, the prayer for the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* should be made according to one of the various patterns used in regular *salâh*. [*Sahîh Sunan an-Nasâ'î*, vol.2, p.428, #1880; *Sahîh al-Bukhârî*, vol.4, p.385, #589]

Du'â for the Dead - After each of the remaining two or more *takbîrs*, sincere prayers should be made for the dead, their relatives and the living. Nothing from the Qur'ân should be recited following these remaining *takbîrs*. [*Dâwûd*, vol.2, pp.616-7, #2740]

Taslîm - There are two ways by which the closing greetings of the funeral prayer may be given [Collected by *al-Bayhaqî* and *at-Tabarânî*, authenticated in *Ahkâmul-Janâ'iz*, p.127, #83]:

either by *taslîm* to the right side only, as in Abû Hurayrah's *hadîth*;
or by saying; *taslîm* to both sides, as in Ibn Mas'ûd's *hadîth*;

Forbidden Times:

There are three times in the day when *salâtul-janâzah* or any other *salâh* is strictly forbidden except in the case of an emergency. These are the times during which the sun worshippers used to perform their rites of worship. Thus, these became forbidden times in order to avoid any resemblance to them and to prevent non-muslims from thinking that muslims might also be worshipping the sun.

> Uqbah ibn Amir said, "There are three times in which the Messenger of Allâh *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* used to forbid us from making salâh or burying our dead:
>
> When the sun is rising until [the disc of the sun] is clearly above the horizon.
> When the sun reaches the middle of the sky until it declines.
> When the sun is setting until it [completely] disappears."

[*Sahîh Muslim*, vol.2, p.395, #1811 & p.906, #3186]

The Burial

Injunctions Regarding Burial:

Burying Everyone - Muslims are obliged to bury everyone who dies in areas under their jurisdiction.

Muslims Buried Seperately - Muslims should not be buried beside non-muslims, nor non-muslims beside muslims; each should have their own seperate graveyard.

Burial in the Graveyard - It was the Prophet's *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* Sunnah to bury the dead in the graveyard of Madînah, known as *al-Baqî*. [*Sahîh al-Bukhârî*, vol.2, p.156, #280]

Depth of the Grave - The grave should be dug deep and wide, and be well-prepared. [*Sunan Ibn-i-Mâjah*, vol.2, p.425, #1560]

Shape of the Grave - The grave may be dug straight down (*shaqq*) with a burial chamber in the middle or with a niche (*lahd*) to create the burial chamber on the side. However, in both cases, a burial chamber is created from the earth, and sealed with bricks of unbaked clay. Both methods were practiced in the time of the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. However, the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* favored the lahd style. [*Sunan Ibn-i-Mâjah*, vol.2, p.423, #1557]

Number of Bodies in a grave - Two or more bodies may be buried in the same grave.This may be due to the large number of dead resulting from a natural calamity or plague,or dead may be from the same family. [*Sahîh al-Bukhârî*, vol.2, p.239, #427]

Injunctions Concerning Placing The Body In The Grave:

Men and Not Women - It is preferable that only men should be responsible for placing the dead body inside the grave, even if the dead person is a woman. This is due to the fact that it has been the custom among muslims from the time of the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* until today. The process requires a certain amount of strength, and men are generally stronger than women.

Near Relatives - The blood relatives of the dead have more right to place the body in the grave, based on the general meaning of the following Qur'ânic verse:

> **"Blood relatives have more right to one another in Allâh's scripture."** [Chapter al-Anfâl (8):75]

The Husband is permitted to place his wife in the grave on condition that he did not have sexual relations with his wife the previous night. [*Sahîh al-Bukhârî*, vol.2, p.238, #426]

Feet First - It is preferable that the body be placed in the niche feet first. This was the recorded way of the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam*.

On the Right Side - Place the dead body in the grave on its right side with the face of the dead person towards towards the *qiblah* (Makkah).

Du'â - At the time of inserting the body in the grave, those handling the procedure are recommended to make one of the following short prayers:

Ibn 'Umar said, Whenever the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* placed a dead person in his grave, he would say, *"In the name of Allâh, and according to the way (Sunnah) of the Messenger of Allâh."* [*Sunan Ibn-i-Mâjah*, vol.2, pp.419-20, #1150 authenticated in *Sahîh Sunan Ibn Mâjah*, vol.1, p.259, #1260]

Throwing Dirt on the Grave - It is recommended for those near the grave to

throw three double-handfuls of dirt into the grave after the burial chamber has been sealed.

After Burial

Raising the grave - It is that the earth of the grave be slightly raised, no more than a palm's width, so as to be higher than the surrounding ground. This is in order that it be easily distinguishable and not disrespected. In time the raised portion will naturally shrink as the earth settles.

Marking the Grave - Placing a stone or something similar, without inscriptions, to identify the location of the grave is also from the Sunnah, the marker will help people later locate the grave in order to bury other family members in the same vicinity.

Structures over Graves - The building of any kind of structures over graves is strictly prohibited. [*Sahîh Muslim*, vol.2, p.459, #2116]

Du'â - On the completion of the burial, it is recommended that those present at the grave-site offer prayers on behalf of the deceased. [Authenticated in *Sahîh Sunan Abî Dâwûd*, vol.2, p.620, #2758]

The prayers of other muslims on behalf of the dead will benefit the dead,by the permission of Allâh.

> *"The prayer of a muslim for his muslim brother in his absence will be answered. As long as he prays for the good of his brother,there is an angel assigned near his head who says:Amen,and may the same be for you."* [*Sahîh Muslim*, vol.4, p.14 29, #6590]

Fasting - Fasts missed by dead persons may be done on their behalf by their close relatives.The fasts may be from Ramadan or from oaths (*nathar*).

> Aishah quoted Allâh's Messenger *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* as saying, *"Whoever died owing fasts,his guardian should fast on his behalf."* [*Sahîh al-Bukhârî*, vol.3, p.99, #173 and *Sahîh Muslim*, vol.2, p.556, #2553]

Planting Twigs on Graves - It is not permissable to plant any flowers or twigs on the grave. The placing of wreaths and flowers is a non-muslim ritual. The companions of the Prophetsallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallamand the early generation of muslim scholars did not practice this ritual. It is however, authentically narrated that the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* did, on one single occasion, stick a palm leaf in a grave. [*Sahîh al-Bukhârî*, vol.2, pp.249-50, #443 and *Sahîh Muslim*, vol.1, pp.171-2, #575]

Annual Visits to Graves - Visiting graves on the anniversary of a person's death, or at the time of special annual festivals of the deceased is forbidden. Also, setting out on journeys to visit graves was specifically forbidden by the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam*. This practice forms the basis of idolatrous pilgrimages in other religions. [*Sahîh al-Bukhârî*, vol.1, p.157, #281 and *Sahîh Muslim*, vol.2, p.699, #3218]

Recitation of Qur'ân - There is no basis for the recitation of Qur'ân in the graveyard. Neither the Fâtihah (first chapter) nor any other chapter of the Qur'ân should be read near the

graves.

Visiting Non-Muslim Graves - Although participation in the funeral rites of non-muslims is not permitted,muslims are allowed to visit the graves of disbelievers for reflection.However,praying for those who die in a state of disbelief is totally prohibited.

> **"Whether you (O Muhammad *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam*) ask forgiveness for them (hypocrites) or ask not forgiveness for them ... (and even) if you ask seventy times for their forgiveness ... Allâh will not forgive them, because they have disbelieved in Allâh and His Messenger (Muhammad *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam*). And Allâh guides not those people who are *Fâsiqûn* (rebellious, disobedient to Allâh)."** [The Noble Qur'ân 9:80]

> **"And never (O Muhammad) pray (funeral prayer) for any of them (hypocrites) who dies, nor stand at his grave. Certainly they disbelieved in Allâh and His Messenger, and died while they were *Fâsiqûn* (rebellious, - disobedient to Allâh and His Messenger)."** [The Noble Qur'ân 9:84]

Prophet Muhammad was prevented by Allâh from praying for his own mother at her funeral, because she and his father had died as polytheists. [*Sahîh Muslim*, vol.2, p.463, #2130]

The Charity Of Children - Parents will benefit from whatever righteous deeds their children do, without decreasing the reward of their children's good deeds. A righteous child is considered to be part of the parent's earnings. [*Sunan Abû Dâwûd*, vol.2, p.1002, #3521. *Sahîh Muslim*, vol.3, p.866, #4002 and *Sahîh al-Bukhârî*, vol.2, p.266, #470]

Visiting Graves

Visiting graves is recommended in Islâm in order to help the living reflect on the shortness of this life and the closeness of the next. [See *Sahîh Muslim*, vol.2, p.463, #2131]

Women Visiting Graves...

The recommendation to visit graves is general and includes women, just as the earlier prohibition included them without any special mention. Furthermore, women share in the benefits of visiting the graves.

When the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* found a woman crying in the graveyard, he did not chase her out of the graveyard, but told her not to cry. Anas ibn Mâlik related that once the Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* passed by a woman crying beside a grave and said to her, *"Fear Allâh and be patient."* [*Sahîh al-Bukhârî*, vol.2, p.208, #372; *Sahîh Muslim*, vol.2, p.439, #2013]

After mentioning this *Hadîth* under the heading Visiting Graves, Ibn Hajar said: The [scholars] disagreed regarding women [visiting graves]. The majority held that they are included in the general permission for visiting graves [if there is no danger of corruption]. The ruling permitting women to visit graves is supported by *Hadîth*. The source of evidence in the *Hadîth* is the fact that he *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* did not censure the woman for

sitting beside the grave, and whatever he approves is proof [of it's permissibility]. [Fathul-Bârî, vol.4, p.244]

However, frequent visitation of graves by women is not permissible. Hassân ibn Thâbit narrated that Allâh's Messenger *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* cursed women who frequently visit graves.

Perhaps the reason for not frequenting the graves is the possible negative results of such visits like:

The loss of some of their husband's rights due to their frequent absences from the home,
The unnecessary public exposure of women,
Increased depression leading to wailing and other forbidden expressions of grief.

Speaking about the Deceased

Insha'Allâh, there is punishment to the deceased when you speak ill off them at the time of the funeral. This does not mean that the deceased person hears you speaking ill or well of them.

I came to Medina when an epidemic had broken out. While I was sitting with 'Umar bin Al-Khattab a funeral procession passed by and the people praised the deceased. 'Umar said, "It has been affirmed to him." And another funeral procession passed by and the people praised the deceased. 'Umar said, "It has been affirmed to him." A third (funeral procession) passed by and the people spoke badly of the deceased. He said, "It has been affirmed to him." I (Abû Al-Aswad) asked, "O chief of the believers! What has been affirmed?" He replied, "I said the same as the Prophet had said, that is: if four persons testify the piety of a Muslim, Allâh will grant him Paradise." We asked, "If three persons testify his piety?" He (the Prophet) replied, "Even three." Then we asked, "If two?" He replied, "Even two." We did not ask him regarding one witness. [*al-Bukhârî* 2.449, Narrated Abû Al Aswad]

A funeral procession passed and the people praised the deceased. The Prophet *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam* said, *"It has been affirmed to him."* Then another funeral procession passed and the people spoke badly of the deceased. The Prophet said, *"It has been affirmed to him."* 'Umar bin Al-Khattab asked (Allâh's Apostle *sallallâhu 'alayhi wa sallam*), "What has been affirmed?" He replied, *"You praised this, so Paradise has been affirmed to him; and you spoke badly of this, so Hell has been affirmed to him. You people are Allâh's witnesses on earth."* [*al-Bukhârî* 2.448, Narrated Anas bin Malik]